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The Folklore of the Daisy

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Source: *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 69, No. 271 (Jan. - Mar., 1956), pp. 13-21

Published by: [American Folklore Society](#)

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# THE FOLKLORE OF THE DAISY

BY KATHARINE T. KELL

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## 1. THE DAISY FAMILY

ONE interesting adjunct to the study of plant lore is that of folk botany, or the folk attempt at systematic plant-classifications. According to one viewpoint, these classifications reflect the early groping of scientific botany itself. Thus, for example, is Theophrastian teaching echoed when folk-usage divides the plant world into trees, shrubs, vines, and herbs, with perhaps a distinction being made between cultivated and wild plants ("weeds"). Then again, folk botany will be based on the folk-uses of plants, often with the consequent involvement of the Doctrine of Signatures.<sup>1</sup>

The boundaries of such systems are, of course, nebulous. Coexistent with them is still another which approaches our present botanical method of natural classification.<sup>2</sup> This is a system based on similarity in the appearance of leaves, flowers, or growth habits. The plants of the Daisy family seem to have in common only the similarity in appearance of the flower heads, which are characterized by a more or less prominent, textured center surrounded by one or more rows of showy petals. The petals vary in color and size. They can be red, yellow, purple, orange, blue, and pink, as well as white: Red Daisy, *Hieracium aurantiacum* (Hawkweed); Yellow Daisy, *Rudbeckia hirta* (Black-eyed Susan); Purple Daisy, *Aster patens*; Orange Daisy, *Erigeron aurantiacus* (Fleabane); Blue Daisy, *Globularia* sp.; Pink Daisy, *Chrysanthemum coccineum*; and Large White Mountain Daisy, *Erigeron coulteri* (Fleabane).<sup>3</sup> The flower heads can be as small as half an inch across, as with *Erigeron annuus* (Daisy Fleabane), or as large as three in *Chrysanthemum uliginosum*.<sup>4</sup> Some grow from a basal tuft or rosette of foliage, as does the English Daisy; some have ferny leaves like the ill-smelling *Anthemis cotula* (which is variously called Dog, Horse, Pigsty, Poison, or Stinking Daisy);<sup>5</sup> while still others have either flower sprays<sup>6</sup> or several flowers closely attached up and down the stems.<sup>7</sup> Most of them belong to the same botanical family, *Compositae*,<sup>8</sup> the distinguishing mark of which is a disk of many tiny florets crowded together on a flowering head, but Daisies appear also in such other botanical groups as *Ranunculaceae*,<sup>9</sup> *Rosaceae*,<sup>10</sup> *Plumbaginaceae*,<sup>11</sup> and *Leguminosae*.<sup>12</sup> There is even a sea creature, not a plant, called a Daisy: *Actinia bellis*, Daisy-anemone or Sea-anemone, also called Animal Flower, "from the blossom-like appearance of their expanded disks and tentacles, and their gorgeous colours."<sup>13</sup>

There are, however, certain "standard" plants, kinds of norms, by which other Daisies are judged. In different parts of the English-speaking world these plants are given the unqualified name of Daisy, and hence become the measuring instruments to which other Daisies are related. In England the Daisy is *Bellis perennis*; in America

it is usually *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*; in New Zealand, the genus *Lagenophora*; and in Australia, *Brachycome iberidifolia*, or various species of *Vittadinia*.<sup>14</sup>

If these plants are the "standards" in those areas, however, they are not so elsewhere. *Bellis perennis* is usually given the qualified name of English Daisy in America; and in England, *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* that of Ox-eye Daisy. The Australian *Brachycome iberidifolia*, if it is known at all in England and America, is called the Swan-River Daisy.<sup>15</sup> This is not to say that the "standard" Daisies always have unqualified Daisy names (or are always even called Daisy) in the areas where they are the "standards." We, as well as the English, sometimes call our own the Ox-eye Daisy,<sup>16</sup> and the English sometimes call theirs a Margaret.<sup>17</sup>

The lists which conclude this discussion of the Daisy family, though doubtless incomplete, show many of the names—most of them vividly descriptive, and all inviting speculation as to their origin and diffusion—by which the English and American "standard" Daisies are known. It is probable that the dearth of American names for the English Daisy compared to the quantity of English names for the American Daisy stems from the fact that our Daisy grows wild in England, but their Daisy does not, so far as the writer knows, grow wild here (except when invading lawns from flower beds). Yet this does not mean that our most common Daisy, the Ox-eye, is native to America. It was brought here from Germany, either deliberately or as a stowaway, during the period of colonization. Its dissemination was given great impetus (so the story goes) during the Revolutionary War, when its seed was in the German-bought fodder given to the horses of General Burgoyne's army.<sup>18</sup>

The American "standard" Daisy is variously called: *in England*, Ox-eye Daisy, Bull Daisy, Dog Daisy, Horse-daisy, Horse Gowan, White-gowlon, Large White Gowan, Great Daisy, Butter Daisy, Midsummer Daisy, St. John's Flower, Moon Daisy, Moon-penny, Devil's Daisy, Thunder-daisy, Dun-daisy, and Marguerite;<sup>19</sup> *in the United States*, Ox-eye Daisy, Bull's-eye Daisy, Horse Daisy, Big Daisy, Great White Ox-eye, White Daisy, White-weed, White-man's Weed, Kellup-weed, Poverty-weed, Poor-land Daisy, Sheriff-weed, Sheriff-Pink, Farmer's Curse, Dutch-curse, Dutch Morgan, Marguerite, Herb Margaret, Maudlin Daisy, Moonflower, Midsummer Daisy, Golden Daisy, Field Daisy, Common Field Daisy, and Pismire;<sup>20</sup> *in Scotland*, Dog-Daisy and Gowan;<sup>21</sup> *in Nova Scotia*, Dog-blow; *in Labrador and Newfoundland*, Bachelor's Buttons. *Other names* are Love-me-Love-me-Not, Love-me, Magdalen's Daisy, Moon-penny Daisy, Moon-wort, Pretty Maids, Mather, Priests, White Caps, White Gold, Poor-land Flower, and Fleabane.<sup>22</sup>

The English "standard" Daisy is called: *in England*, Marguerite, Margaret, Herb Margaret, Margaret's Herb, Brave Margaret, Dicky Daisy, Childing Daisy, Bairnwort, Banwort, Bonewort, Boneflower, Bruisewort, Bennert, Billy Buttons, Consound, Cat-posy, Dog-Daisy, Cockiloorie, and Maple-flower;<sup>23</sup> *in the United States*, English Daisy, Scotch Daisy, European Daisy, Lawn Daisy, and Bachelor's Buttons;<sup>24</sup> *in Scotland*, Gowan, Ewe Gowan, May Gowan, Gowlan, and Bairnwort.<sup>25</sup> *Other names* are Chaucer Daisy, Easter Daisy, True Daisy, Dog-blow, Woundwort, and Cumfrie.<sup>26</sup>

The reader will observe a frequent recurrence of two names, Gowan and Marguerite. Gowan is a Scottish and northern English dialectal name. Etymologists disagree on its derivation, some believing it to be a corrupted form of the Gaelic *gugan*, which meant bud or flower, others seeing it as a variant of *gollan* or *golland*, related in meaning to gold. Still another source relates it to the Celtic word *gwen* 'fair.'<sup>27</sup>

When the name Gowan is used alone it refers not only to the English Daisy and the Ox-eye, but also (in America) to a species of Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*); and

when used with qualifying words, it can denote many other plants as well. The Marsh Marigold is variously called Horse Gowan, Lucken Gowan, Yellow Gowan, Meadow Gowan, Open Gowan, and Water Gowan. The Dandelion is called Horse Gowan, Milk Gowan, Witch Gowan, and Yellow Gowan. A Horse Gowan, however, can also be either a Chamomile (*Anthemis nobilis*) or a Feverfew (*Matricaria chamomilla*); and a Witch Gowan can be a Globe-daisy (*Globularia sp.*), otherwise known as an Open or a Lukin Gowan. A Gule Gowan is a Corn Marigold (*Chrysanthemum segetum*); and a Ling Gowan is a Hawkweed (*Hieracium pilosella*).<sup>28</sup>

The other name, Marguerite, is said by French etymologists to derive not from the proper name but from the word "pearl," as descriptive of the flower-head of *Bellis perennis* (presumably when in bud). Folkard believes the source to have been the Greek word *margarites* 'pearl,' from which it later became *Margarita* in Latin and *Marguerite* in French, the same word in each language meaning both pearl and daisy. Association has been so exclusively with the proper name, however, that Daisy is current in England as a pet name for anyone called Margaret.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to the English Daisy originally so called, the name Marguerite now denotes many other species. It can be our Daisy, the Ox-eye; it can also be the common garden Carnation.<sup>30</sup> A Polish friend has even identified its picture for the writer as that of the Sweet Alyssum, adding that the Polish name for it is *Malgorzatka*, the diminutive of the given name for Margaret, *Malgorzata*.<sup>31</sup> In Scotland it is said that a Marguerite is the garden Daisy, as distinguished from a wild one; and the same plant has been identified to the writer as what we call a Shasta Daisy.<sup>32</sup> In Ohio, on the other hand, a Marguerite is a wild Daisy as distinguished from a garden one, which is obviously not identifiable.<sup>33</sup> In parts of midwestern America a Marguerite is "any larger, fancier Daisy," with such features as "extra-large, fringed, or double petals," i.e., larger than a wild Daisy such as *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*.<sup>34</sup> A White Marguerite is *Chrysanthemum frutescens*, the florists' Marguerite; a Blue Marguerite is *Felicia amelloides*, also called Blue Daisy; a Yellow or Golden Marguerite is *Anthemis tinctoria* (Chamomile), and a variety of it is called Hardy Marguerite. Finally, *Chrysanthemum coccineum*, which is known as Pyrethrum (a former botanical name), Painted Lady, and Painted Daisy, is also, in a recent garden catalogue, called Colored Marguerite.<sup>35</sup>

There are, furthermore, two varieties of *Bellis perennis*, one of which (known chiefly in England) goes under such names as March Daisy, Childers, Childing Daisy, Jackanapes-on-Horseback, and Hen and Chickens Daisy, or just Hen and Chickens.<sup>36</sup> The other is the cultivated, double form, known in England as the Double Daisy and in America usually by the same name as its single counterpart (English Daisy),<sup>37</sup> although the writer has also heard it called Strawflower in the Detroit area, possibly because of confusion arising from its resemblance to *Helichrysum*, the plant usually called the Strawflower.

There are Blue, Michaelmas, and Christmas Daisies, all referring to several species of *Aster*; Artic, Crown, and Turfing Daisies, referring to different species of *Chrysanthemum*; and Daisy Fleabane, Field Daisy, or just Daisy, which refer to several species of *Erigeron*. There is an African Daisy, a South African Daisy, an African Golden Daisy, a Butter Daisy, a Yellow Daisy, a Sun Daisy, a Double Daisy, a Cone-headed Daisy, and an Everlasting Daisy.<sup>38</sup>

There are, in fact, more than ninety species of plants called Daisy, Gowan, or

Marguerite. The result of such confusion is that some botanists<sup>39</sup> profess disbelief (perhaps justifiably) in any rational meaning to common plant names; but to the folklorist they have meaning, if only in serving to identify families in folk botany. The large number of plants called Daisies is a folk expression in botanical classification. Of still more interest to the folklorist, however, are the many legends and beliefs which have spread with the Daisy and which will be discussed in following sections of this paper.

## 2. DAISY STORIES

Though there are now ninety and more different Daisies, in the beginning there was only *Bellis perennis*, the common name for which originated early in the history of England. Its first known appearance in writing is some time in the eleventh century, and its first known form is *Dæges eage* 'Day's-eye,' so called because the petals close at night to cover the yellow center disk.<sup>40</sup> There are several explanatory tales of the origin of the name, but—curiously—none so far encountered by this writer explains why the flower closes at night. It would seem that the folk, having once commented upon the fact by giving the Daisy its name, thereafter ignored it.

By the late sixteenth century, according to Lyte (*Dodoens*, II, XIX [1578], 169, as quoted by the *OED*, s.v. "Daisy"), "There be two kindes of daisies, the great and the small." The late nineteenth century knew four "official" and several "unofficial" names: "There are also the Great or Ox-eye, or Moon daisy . . . , the Michaelmas daisy . . . , and the Blue daisy of the South of Europe (*Globularia*). The name has been given to a few other plants, but none of them are true Daisies."<sup>41</sup>

The first origin-tale is Celtic and is, apparently, to be found in the poems of Ossian. Every child who dies unborn, the story goes, returns to earth as a new flower. Thus, a woman named Malvina, who mourned the death of her baby, was consoled by the Maidens of King Morven, who told her that the child had been turned into a flower with a golden disk surrounded by silvery petals. It looked like an infant playing in a field; and it became, therefore, the very symbol of the innocence of a newborn baby.<sup>42</sup>

Another tale, found in Chaucer's *Legendes of Goode Women*, deals with the Daisy as a symbol of fidelity. Queen Alceste sacrificed her life to save her husband's, and was transformed into the flower because of her great fidelity. Each petal represented one of her virtues.<sup>43</sup>

The third legend is of somewhat doubtful validity as folklore. It tells of Belides, a female meadow-nymph, who was engaged to Ephigeus. Vertumnus, god of fruit trees, saw her dancing one day in a field, fell in love with her, and changed her into a Daisy so as to conceal her from Ephigeus.<sup>44</sup> This story rings false because the English *Bellis perennis* was not known to the classical ancients from whom, to judge by the proper names, the story would be supposed to have come.<sup>45</sup>

The flower was, however, known to northern Europeans. I have found no Daisy stories clearly traceable to pagan days, but several are linked with Christianity. One of the better known among these relates the Daisy to Margaret of Antioch, or St. Margaret of the Dragon. Margaret, the Christian daughter of a heathen priest, was scorned by her father and driven from her home to live with her foster mother in the country, where she tended sheep. Her subsequent refusal of a good marriage, as the price of her renunciation of Christianity, led to torture and, after a number of miracles, to her death about 275 A.D. The church canonized her and proclaimed 20

July as her special day.<sup>46</sup> The Daisy became her symbol probably in connection with the name "Marguerite,"<sup>47</sup> and it is said that she, like the flower, always looked heavenward.<sup>48</sup>

The Daisy is symbolic of other Christian figures, including Margaret of Cortona, a fallen woman who repented and thus earned respect as a modern Mary Magdalene.<sup>49</sup> Mary Magdalene herself, as well as St. John and St. Barnabas, are symbolized by the Ox-eye Daisy. That Daisy is said to have sprung from the tears of Magdalene, and it is used to decorate churches for St. John's Midsummer Night's ceremonies which, in England, are observed on 23 June. A nineteenth century source says: "It is probable that the ceremonies of a heathen festival, in spite of centuries of Christianity, crop up in the observances of this day. Its burning lamps and bonfires point to the worship of the sun-gods, as do the appropriation of all sun-like flowers as emblems of S. John. His flowers are the Ox-eye Daisy. . . ."<sup>50</sup> Also, through the name "Midsummer Daisy" (according to Folkard, p. 56), the Daisy is consecrated to St. Barnabas, whose special day is 11 June.

Two other legends relate Daisies to the Christ-Child. It is uncertain, however, just which Daisy is meant, for they are designated only as "White Chrysanthemums." If they are not Ox-eyes, then it is probable that they are another common Chrysanthemum such as the Feverfew, or even the Shasta Daisy. It is unlikely that they are any of the showy garden Chrysanthemums as we know them, for these were not known in Europe until the seventeenth century at the earliest. According to *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (s.v. "Chrysanthemum") "Breynius in 1689 was the first European to mention the Chrysanthemum, giving it the name of *Matricaria japonica maxima*." This could be the Shasta Daisy, *C. maximum*, since it is customary with botanists to retain the specific name when assigning a species to a new genus. Folkard, p. 282, says "The Chrysanthemum was first introduced into England in 1764 by Miller, who received a . . . *Chrysanthemum Indicum* from Nîmpu, and cultivated it at the botanical garden at Chelsea. In the seventeenth century a Chrysanthemum was grown at Dantsic [*sic*]. . . . Three Chrysanthemums (the Corn Marigold, the Ox-eye Daisy, and the Feverfew) are natives of England. . . . The autumn Chrysanthemums are descended from either the Chinese or Indian varieties. . . ." The pompon varieties are descended from two different plants brought to England by Robert Fortune in 1846 from the island of Chusan.<sup>51</sup>

The first of the Christ-Child legends, found in Skinner's *Myths and Legends* . . . , p. 21, asserts that the White Chrysanthemum was born at the same time as Christ. When the caravan of King Malcher reached the spot where the flower grew, he cried, "It is the place . . . for look! Here is a flower, rayed like the star that has guided us, and which even now is hanging above our heads." He picked the White Chrysanthemum and entered the stable, where he placed the flower in the hand of the new-born Christ-Child. "All went to their knees before the shining presence, bearing as a sceptre the winter flower, white likeness of the guide star."

The other legend is given by Vernon Quinn (*Stories and Legends* . . . , p. 25), who says it comes from the Black Forest region of Germany. One Christmas Eve a peasant and his family took in a ragged urchin whom they found shivering on their doorstep. They warmed the child, wrapped him in a blanket, and led him to the table for food. Each member of the family put something of his own fare on the plate of the newcomer. When the plate was placed before him, the blanket fell away and he

was revealed in shining white with a halo around his head. "I am the Christ Child," he announced, and thereupon vanished. The next morning two White Chrysanthemums were found on the doorstep where he had stood the night before. "And to this day the peasants in the Black Forest strive to have white chrysanthemums blooming in their huts on Christmas Eve, believing that thus they are sheltering the Christ Child."

There is yet another story which relates the Daisy to a Christian figure. This one (from Beals, p. 87) is about St. Augustine, who appears to have been very fond of the small, yellow-centered flower. It is said that once when he was about to speak to an outdoor audience in England, he saw a small boy holding a Daisy-chain. He took the chain from the boy and slowly pulled the flowers apart as he preached an inspired sermon on the theme of brotherhood. "'The sun,' he said, 'has imaged himself in the center of each of these flowers, as the Son of Righteousness will image Himself in each of your hearts. From this sun in the daisy, white rays spread around. So may the rays of purity and goodness spread around you, reflected from the light of heaven within you. As these flowers are strung together in a chain, so may you in England be united to each other, and to the holy churches of the world, by a chain that shall never be broken.'"

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The Doctrine of Signatures (to be treated more fully in a later section of this paper) is the belief that every species is marked in some manner to show its use to man. See Agnes Arber, *Herbals* (Cambridge, Eng., 1912), p. 134, on Theophrastus' "History of Plants," and pp. 136-140, 204-220, for her discussion of the days when botany was a "mere handmaid to medicine."

Sections 3-4. will appear in a subsequent issue of this volume of the *JAF*.

<sup>2</sup> Similar confusion existed in scientific botany until fairly recently. Arber, p. 143, says: "In the work of writers such as Dodoens and d'Aléchamps . . . [we find] the working of three different principles . . . by the simultaneous insistence (i) on the habitat, (ii) on the 'virtues,' and (iii) on the structure, as affording clues to the systematic position of the plant in question."

<sup>3</sup> See, respectively, Joseph M. Showalter, *Book of Wild Flowers*, 2nd ed., The National Geographic Society (Washington, 1933), p. 89; Ethel Hinckley Hausman, *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of American Wild Flowers* (Garden City, 1947), p. 103; Willard N. Clute, *American Plant Names*, 3rd ed. (Indianapolis, 1940), p. 76; L. H. Bailey, *Hortus* (New York, 1930), p. 200; *The Oxford-English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1933), s.v. "Daisy" (hereinafter cited as *OED*); Sherman R. Dufy, "Pink Daisy for Next Summer's Bloom," *Garden Magazine*, XVIII, No. 2 (1918), 53; Louise and James Bush-Brown, *America's Garden Book*, rev. ed. (New York, 1952), p. 510.

<sup>4</sup> Frances Theodora Parsons, *How to Know the Wild Flowers*, rev. ed. (New York, 1935), p. 60; Leicester Bodine Holland, *The Garden Bluebook* (Garden City, 1915), p. 379.

<sup>5</sup> A. B. Lyons, *Plant Names Scientific and Popular*, 2nd ed. (Detroit, 1907), p. 42; Hausman, p. 118.

<sup>6</sup> Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*, called Deadmen's Daisy in Labrador and Newfoundland; see Fanny D. Bergen, "Popular American Plant Names," *JAF*, XI, No. 42 (1898), 228. The name Dog Daisy is given by two sources: Lyons, p. 12, and the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, *American Medicinal Plants of Commercial Importance*, Misc. Pub. No. 77 (Washington, 1930), p. 66. Louise Beebe Wilder refers to all *Achilleas* as Daisies in "The Cream of the Rock Garden Daisies," *House and Garden*, LXIII, No. 5 (1933), 73.

<sup>7</sup> Chicory, *Cichorium intybus*, called Blue Daisy; Lyons, p. 121.

<sup>8</sup> Edgar T. Wherry, *Wild Flower Guide* (Garden City, 1948), pp. 129ff.; Helen Van Pelt

Wilson, "Distinguished Compositas," *House and Garden*, LXXXIV (Nov., 1943), 92-93, and "Daisies Do Tell," *Better Homes and Gardens*, XII (March, 1934), 26-27.

<sup>9</sup> The names Butter Daisy and Yellow Gowan are given to *Ranunculus acris* by Lyons, p. 390, and to *R. bulbosus* and *R. repens* by Clute, pp. 4-5, while Cabbage Daisy is given to *Trollius europaeus* and to *T. laxus* by Lyons, p. 472.

<sup>10</sup> *Potentilla tomentilla*, Ewe Daisy; Lyons, p. 375.

<sup>11</sup> *Statice armeria* (*Armeria maritima*), Marsh or Sea Daisy; OED, s.v. "Daisy."

<sup>12</sup> *Trifolium repens* (White Clover) is called Sheep's Gowan by Lyons, p. 469.

<sup>13</sup> Gosse, *Marine Zoology* (1855), I, 15, as quoted by OED, s.v. "Sea Anemone." Daisy Anemone appears in OED, s.v. "Daisy."

<sup>14</sup> OED, s.v. "Daisy." This source spells the botanical genus of the Australian Daisy as "Vita-denia," while "Vittadinia" is given by the American Joint Committee on Horticultural Nomenclature in *Standardized Plant Names* (Salem, Mass., 1923), p. 526 (hereafter cited as *Stan. Pl. Nms.*).

<sup>15</sup> *Stan. Pl. Nms.*, p. 40; OED, s.v. "Daisy." The Swan-River Daisy is found in G. A. R. Phillips, *The Book of Garden Flowers* (London, 1952), p. 151, and in Bush-Brown, p. 389; it is sometimes grown here as a cultivated, border annual. Lyons (p. 58) says that Daisies in Ohio are *Aster sp.*, and (p. 180) *Erigeron pumilus* in the western plains, but the writer is unable to find this latter designation in any other scientific source.

<sup>16</sup> The name given in *Stan. Pl. Nms.*, p. 80. It is used chiefly in writing, however; and Parsons (p. 60) calls it an English name. Bailey, in *The Standard Cyclopaedia of Horticulture* (New York, 1928), I, 960, says that in parts of New England *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum* is called White-weed, while the name Ox-eye is applied to *Rudbeckia hirta* (Black-eyed Susan).

<sup>17</sup> OED, s.v. "Margaret." One of the French designations is *Marguerite*; one of the German, *Margarethen Kraut*; one of the Italian, *Margarita*. See Armenag K. Bedevian, *Illustrated Polyglottic Dictionary of Plant Names* (Cairo, 1936), p. 105.

<sup>18</sup> Harriet L. Keeler, *Our Garden Flowers* (New York, 1925), p. 474.

<sup>19</sup> Dog Daisy denotes "an inferior or worthless sort, or one unfit for human food," according to the OED, s.v. "Dog." Hilderic Friend, *Flowers and Flower Lore*, 2nd ed. (London, 1884), p. 473, says Horse-daisy is a term that is "continually cropping up in local flower-names, and is intended to designate the coarser kind, as distinguished from the smaller." For Butter Daisy, "meaning it spoiled the butter," see Edwin Rollin Spencer, *Just Weeds* (New York, 1940), p. 287; for St. John's Flower, Richard Folkard, Jr., *Plant Lore, Legends, and Lyrics* (London, 1884), p. 52; for Moon-penny, Spencer, p. 287; for Devil's Daisy, Thunder-Daisy, and Dun-daisy, Friend, p. 72, who believes these names ("Dun" being corrupted from "Thunder") indicate the flower was once thought sacred to Thor; and for Marguerite, sometimes called *Grande Marguerite* by the French, *Marguerite* and *Riesenmarguerite* by the Germans, and *Margherite dei prati*, *Margheritone*, and *Margherita grande* by the Italians, see Bedevian, p. 173. All other names appearing in the list may be found in the OED, s.v. "Daisy," "Gowan," "Marguerite," and "Horse."

<sup>20</sup> For Dutch Curse, see Lyons, p. 118, who says it was so called in New Jersey, "having been introduced, it was believed, by Hessian soldiers." Farmer's Curse is found in Hausman, p. 120; Field Daisy, in Spencer, p. 287; White-man's Weed and Sheriff-Pink, in Clute, p. 79. The Maudlin Daisy (Lyons, p. 118) was known in medieval England as a Maudelyne or Maudlin-wort, which are corruptions of the name Magdalene, for it was associated, as will be seen in a subsequent section of this paper, with Mary Magdalene (which accounts also for its various Moon names); see Folkard, p. 444. The remaining American names are given by Lyons, p. 118. A comparison of the names Morgan and Margaret leads one to believe that Dutch Morgan may have evolved from Dutch Margaret.

<sup>21</sup> Dog-Daisy is given by Parsons, p. 60; Gowan is supplied by my informant, Mary Herbison of Dearborn, Michigan, and by the OED, s.v. "Gowan," which says of the name: "When used without defining word, now always denoting the common Daisy (*Bellis perennis*)." Mrs. Herbison, who came from a small town near Edinborough ca. 1935, is nevertheless quite definite in stating that the name Gowan is applied to *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*. "The little Daisy [*Bellis perennis*]," she added, "is never called anything but a Daisy."

<sup>22</sup> For Dog-blow, see the OED, s.v. "Dog"; for Bachelor's Buttons, Bergen, p. 229; for Love-me-Love-me-Not, Neltje Blanchan, *Wild Flowers Worth Knowing* (New York, 1923), p. 246.



All remaining names listed are found in Olive Percival, *Our Old-fashioned Flowers* (Pasadena, 1947), p. 50, but some may now be obsolete, since Percival lists as common names for *Bellis perennis* several stages in the evolution of the spelling of the name Daisy itself, although not necessarily in chronological order. As to Magdalen's Daisy, see fn. 20.

<sup>23</sup> *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1952), s.v. "Daisy," gives Bairnwort as a Yorkshire name, while Keeler, p. 491, says it is Scotch and that the Daisy is so called because it is "the children's plant." For Dicky Daisy, see Holland, p. 95. The names Banwort and Bruisewort, found in Henry N. Ellacombe, *The Plant-Lore and Garden-Craft of Shakespeare*, 2nd ed. (London, 1884), p. 362 (quoting Turner, but not otherwise identifying the source), are said to have evolved "because it helpeth bones to knit agayne." For Billy Buttons, see G. M. Barnes, "Flower Names," *Cornhill Magazine*, CLIII, No. 915 (1936), 324 (cf. Bachelor's Buttons); Dog-Daisy, Lyons, p. 69, who says it is so called in northern England; and for all remaining English names, see Lyons, p. 69, and the *OED*, s.v. "Marguerite" and "Margaret."

<sup>24</sup> For English Daisy, see *Stan. Pl. Nms.*, p. 40; Scotch Daisy, Geo. Frances Atkinson, *Practice Key and Flora of the Eastern, Northern and Central States* (New York, 1912), p. 213; European Daisy, Vernon Quinn, *Leaves, Their Place in Life and Legend* (New York, 1937), p. 167; Bachelor's Buttons, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. "Daisy." Lawn Daisy is supplied by Thelma James, Wayne University, Detroit, Michigan, to whom I am also indebted for guidance in the preparation of this paper.

<sup>25</sup> *OED*, s.v. "Gowan." For Gowan, see Lyons, p. 69; for Bairnwort, fn. 23. For a dissenting opinion as to use of the Gowan names for this species, see the Herbison comments in fn. 21.

<sup>26</sup> Helen Noyes Webster, *Herbs* (Boston, 1939), p. 41, for Chaucer Daisy; Percival, p. 44, gives remaining names, but see also comments on Percival in fn. 22.

<sup>27</sup> For gugan, see *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary* (New York, 1951), s.v. "Gowan"; for gollan and golland, the *OED*, s.v. "Gowan"; for gwen, *Flower Lore* (Belfast, ca. 1880), p. 180.

<sup>28</sup> Percival reports, p. 86, that the Primrose is also called Gowan; and though this application may now be obsolete, there probably once was a connection between the two flowers: see Friend, p. 249, who says the Daisy, *Bellis perennis*, was meant when Primrose appeared in old books. The names listed may be found in *American Medicinal Plants of Commercial Importance*, p. 24; *OED*, s.v. "Gowan," Lyons, pp. 90, 233, 454; Percival, pp. 108, 115; and Friend, p. 58.

<sup>29</sup> The *OED*, s.v. "Margaret"; Folkard, p. 431.

<sup>30</sup> *Dianthus caryophyllus*; L. H. Bailey, *The Gardener* (New York, 1925), p. 86.

<sup>31</sup> *Alyssum maritimum*; informant, Josephine Sniadowski of Toledo, Ohio, who came from Poland as a child ca. 1915.

<sup>32</sup> *Chrysanthemum maximum*; informant, Herbison. See also A. W. Anderson, *The Coming of the Flowers* (New York, 1951), p. 50, who calls the Shasta Daisy a Marguerite.

<sup>33</sup> Informant: Dorothy Burnett, Birmingham, Mich., who came from Ohio ca. 1938.

<sup>34</sup> Informant: Elizabeth B. Tolle, Birmingham, Mich., who came from Colorado ca. 1920.

<sup>35</sup> Marion Black Williams, "These Are Marguerites," *The American Home*, XLVII, No. 3 (1952), 35; *OED*, s.v. "Paris," and "Marguerite"; Bush-Brown, pp. 527, 756; Phillips, p. 26; Bailey, *Cyclopaedia*, I, 299, and *Gardener*, p. 12; *Stan. Pl. Nms.*, p. 80; *Burpee Seed Catalog* (Phila., 1954), s.v. "Pyrethrum"; *Wayside Gardens, Autumn Planting* (Mentor, Ohio, 1950), s.v. "Pyrethrum."

<sup>36</sup> Called Hen and Chickens Daisy because it produces smaller flowers along the stem-nodes after the main flower-head is fully open, according to Phillips, p. 35. March Daisy and Childers are found in Percival, p. 44, and may be obsolete. Percival gives the botanical name as *Bellis perennis prolifera*. Other names listed are from Ellacombe, p. 375.

<sup>37</sup> *Bellis perennis florepleno*, as given in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. "Daisy."

<sup>38</sup> See the *OED*, s.v. "Daisy," and "Michaelmas." For the Artic and Crown Daisies (*Chrysanthemum arcticum* and *C. coronarius*), see Bush-Brown, pp. 527, 404, respectively; for Turfing Daisy (*C. tchihatchewi*), *Stan. Pl. Nms.*, p. 80. Daisy Fleabane, Field Daisy, and Daisy, may all designate *Erigeron philadelphicus*, according to Lyons, p. 180. Field Daisy is given by C. K. Dodge, *Miscellaneous Papers on the Botany of Michigan*, Mich. Geol. and Biol. Survey, No. 31, Biol. Series 6 (Lansing, 1921), p. 218. A Daisy Fleabane may also be *E. annuus* (Lyons, p. 180) and *E. ramosus* (Dodge, p. 71). Bailey, *Cyclopaedia*, III, 3492, gives *E. mucronatus* as a synonym for *Vittadinia triloba* (hort.), which would obviously relate it closely to the Daisies of Australia (see

fn. 14). For African Daisy and South African Daisy (*Arctotis grandis* and *Kaufussia amelloides*), see Bush-Brown, pp. 376, 398; for African Golden Daisy (*Dimorphotheca aurantiaca*), Bailey, *Gardener*, p. 120; Butter Daisy (*Verbesina encelioides*). Pearce Seed Co., *Seeds, Plants, Bulbs*, Offer No. 61-A (Moorestown, N. J., 1954), p. 23; Yellow Daisy (*Layia platyglossa*), Hausman, p. 116; Sun Daisy (*Helianthemum helianthemum*), Lyons, p. 225; Double Daisy (*Matricaria inodora*), Bush-Brown, p. 398; Cone-headed Daisy (*Lepachys columnaris*), Hausman, p. 105; Everlasting Daisy (*Acroclinium roseum*), Pearce Seed Co., p. 9.

<sup>39</sup> See, for example, L. H. Bailey, *How Plants Get Their Names* (New York, 1933), pp. 4ff.

<sup>40</sup> OED, s.v. "Daisy." It is noted in *Flower Lore*, p. 180, that the "Welsh name for daisy, *Llygad y dydd*, has the same meaning as the English 'eye of the day.'"

<sup>41</sup> Ellacombe, *The Plant-Lore and Garden-Craft of Shakespeare*, pp. 361-362.

<sup>42</sup> Ellacombe (p. 364) testily remarks that he found the legend recorded by both a Lady Wilkinson and a Mrs. Lankester, the latter's version appearing in "The Daisy," *Popular Science Review*, I (1862), 19, but "with that grand contempt for giving authorities, which lady-authors too often show, neither of these ladies tells us whence she got the legend." Hilderic Friend in *Flowers and Flower Lore*, p. 455, says he found the legend referred to in a "racy little French work entitled 'Le Diable et ses Cornes,' . . . (p. 62)," which said the story was to be found in the poems of Ossian. Though he states (p. 659, n. 5) that the book was published in Fribourg, in 1876, he fails to give the author's name. Katharine M. Beals, *Flower Lore and Legend* (New York, 1917), pp. 83-84, also says the legend is found in Ossianic poetry, and adds the statement (not found elsewhere by this writer) that "the maidens called the flower the 'day's-eye,' because it closed at night."

<sup>43</sup> Beals, p. 86. Ellacombe (p. 363) places this legend as no older than the fourteenth century. Folkard, in his *Plant Lore, Legends, and Lyrics*, p. 307, says that rather than each petal representing one of Alceste's virtues, she had as many virtues as there were florets in the center disk.

<sup>44</sup> Beals, p. 83. Vernon Quinn, *Leaves, Their Place in Life and Legend*, p. 167, gives the following variation of the tale: "Belides was one of the dryads who presided over the meadows, and while dancing in a field one day, the god of the changing seasons saw her and fell in love with her. But as he ran to embrace her, she was metamorphosed into this flower."

<sup>45</sup> Quinn says (p. 167) "the European Daisy was unknown to the ancient Greeks, and so it finds itself with a Latin name, *Bellis* 'beautiful.' But some one long ago, noting the similarity of this word to the name of the nymph Belides, supplied a ready legend for the daisy's origin." Ellacombe (p. 364) says, "I need scarcely tell you that neither Belides or [*sic*] Ephigeus are classical names—they are mediaeval inventions."

<sup>46</sup> *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. "Margaret, St. (Sancta Margarita)." This source adds that the Greeks call her Marina and have chosen 17 July as her day, "Marina" being the Latin equivalent of "Pelagia," and St. Margaret having become identified with St. Pelagia, who was also called Margarito.

<sup>47</sup> *Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend*, ed. Maria Leach (New York, 1949), I, 275.

<sup>48</sup> Charles M. Skinner, *Myths and Legends of Flowers, Trees, Fruits, and Plants* (Philadelphia, 1911), p. 100. Ellacombe (p. 364) says that this legend is given by Chaucer, but neglects to note in which of Chaucer's works it appears. He adds that a Mrs. Jameson "says that she has seen one, and only one, picture of St. Margaret with Daisies."

<sup>49</sup> Folkard, p. 432. He adds (p. 374) that "the flower is erroneously supposed to have been named after the virtuous St. Margaret of Antioch, . . . who was invoked because in her martyrdom she prayed for lying-in women; whereas it derives its name from St. Margaret of Cortona." The reasons for assigning the Daisy to Margaret of Cortona (as well as to Magdalene) are discussed more fully in a later section of this paper.

<sup>50</sup> *Flower Lore*, p. 16. See also Dorothy Gladys Spicer, *The Book of Festivals* (New York, 1937), p. 59, and *The New Catholic Dictionary* (New York, 1929), p. 606, which gives Mary Magdalen's day as 22 July.

<sup>51</sup> Vernon Quinn, *Stories and Legends of Garden Flowers* (New York, 1939), pp. 25-26.

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